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A Song of God's Statutes

BY ROBERT A. ASHWORTH

Thy statutes are my song as I wander through the world. Psalm 119:54 (Moffatt).

WHAT is a curious juxtaposition of ideas—statutes and songs! How little they have in common, you will perhaps say; they do not belong together at all! Song suggests joy, freedom; while statutes suggest law, duty, necessity, involving obligation and constraint—anything but song!

This apparent incongruity has not grown less with the procession of the years that separate us from the day when these words were written. We must give a wider significance to "statutes" than can have occurred to the psalmist, because he lived before the day when the reign of law dominated the thought of man as it does in this age of science. Everywhere we look—law. No chance or accident anywhere in the universe. Everything determined by invariable sequence, from the revolution of the heavenly spheres in their orbits to the fall of an autumn leaf from the tree.

It is being forced upon us, also, that the behavior of human beings is far more subject to law than we have been accustomed to think. The human body bears many of the aspects of a machine, and the conduct of men may, to a degree, be plotted and predicted; the lawless and fortuitous is excluded. Order, sequence, cause and effect, prevail here as elsewhere. And in the sphere of the moral law, which was the psalmist's particular concern, the statutes of God are not less inexorable than in other realms. At the peril of disaster they must be obeyed. Immanuel Kant declared that two things filled him with awe, the starry heavens and the moral law, and he appeared to think that the

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two were alike in their established and immutable character.

All this is very disquieting and depressing to multitudes. They would prefer a miraculous world in which anything might happen at any moment, a morally undetermined world in which man would be free to follow any vagrant fancy. Such a world would seem to them to have more room for God, to be more comfortable, more friendly to faith and more conducive to song than a world so severely ordered. They find it difficult to set the statutes of God to music.

A Song in the Heart

Yet somehow, in a world of constraint and obligation, we must make a place for song. To silence song in the hearts of men is to impoverish life immeasurably and to make it ineffective. When song dies out of the daily task, not only does work become drudgery but the quality of it suffers. "Give me the man that whistles at his task," exclaims Thomas Carlyle. Songs, moreover, may sometimes be minted into coin. Thoughtful employers of labor are deeply concerned today because the zest of the workman for his work appears to be declining. The effect upon the quality and the amount of the product of lack of interest on the part of the employe appears in the ledger and must be written in red. Somehow, they say, new incentives must be supplied and new interest must be tapped. Somehow the song must be conjured back into the heart of the toiler. There is little profit and no satisfaction in any enterprise that cannot be pursued with joy. Life is too short and the interests of life too weighty to be undertaken morosely. Only a song in the heart will nerve and sustain for any undertaking that is worth while.

It may be questioned whether anything can be well done that is done with distaste. Our educators are learning that. "It doesn't matter what a boy studies, so long as he dislikes it enough," satirically suggests Will Rogers. But the principle here suggested was once followed without any sense of iron. Today we have perhaps reacted too far in the other direction. "What are you going to study in geography this morning?" asked a visitor of the teacher. "I don't know," was the reply. "The class hasn't come in yet." On the other hand, we recognize that we learn most easily that which we enjoy, and that when he has enlisted the pupil's interest the teacher's task is half done. "We have had enough mathematics," I heard a teacher say to a crowded classroom the other day. "No, no," was the instant reply, "don't stop, we like it!" This is the new idea in education and it is a good idea. It is the singing heart that is most plastic and the processes of education should be set to music.

Song and Patriotism

Patriotism also rests on song. "Let me write the songs of a nation, and I care not who writes its laws," some wise man once remarked. The poet is as necessary and as potent in war as is the general, and the soldier who goes silent into battle is not likely to be victorious. Cromwell's Ironsides were invincible when they charged chanting the songs of David. There were song leaders as well as drill masters in every training camp in America during the last great war and without doubt the authors of "The Long, Long Trail" and "Over There" had their part in the victories won. A good song may be as valuable a recruit as a division of troops.

A fruitful internationalism rests upon a song in the hearts of common men. It is no accident that "peace" and "harmony" are synonymous terms. Leagues of nations, world courts, pacts to outlaw war, have their place and part. There must be clear thinking and wise planning. The instruments and institutions of peace must be devised. But until they are set to music, until the spirit of song informs them, until they get the chords of the hearts of the people everywhere to vibrating, they will not put an end to war. We must enlist the emotions as well as the minds of men before nations will disarm.

Religion the Mother of Song

Finally, religion is dependent on song. Religion is the mother of the arts. Song was born of religion, as were the drama, architecture, painting and sculpture. Religion is more closely allied with art than with science. It deals with values, with the meaning of facts, with their relation to life and character and destiny. Religion will sing itself into the hearts of men when it may find it difficult to insert itself into their heads. A religion without song is inconceivable. There are bound to be differences in men's thinking as men approach the city of God from different angles, but at a level lower than that at which men do their thinking, at the level at which they live, there is already substantial unity. Men who differ greatly in their theology sing the same songs. In sacred song all Christians unite hearts and voices in the great hymns of the church universal, by whomsoever they may have been written, whether it be "Rock of Ages," by Toplady the Calvinist, or "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," by Wesley the Methodist, or "In the Cross of Christ I Glory," by Bowring the Unitarian, or "Hark, Hark, My Soul," by Faber the Roman Catholic. Writing of religion and music, Chateaubriand declares, "Song has come to us from the angels. Christianity invented the organ and gave sighs to brass. Wherever she has erected her altars there have arisen a people who sing as naturally as the birds of the air. Song is the daughter of prayer. The Iroquois, who could not take the doctrines of the church, were overcome by her songs. Love and harmony are the things she has taught to man." When the song dies out of the heart of the Christian he has lost his religion; and when the church ceases to sing she is doomed.

Now since the statutes and the song, duty and joy, labor and the zest of life are equally essential, we must learn that the two are not incompatible with one another. God's method is that of law, invariable sequence, but he labors to the sound of music. The poetic conception of the "music of the spheres" may have more basis than that of imagination. Our human hearing is sensitive to vibrations only within very nar-

row limits and it may be that there are harmonies in the universe that are audible only to the ear of God. The immutable law that holds the planets in their courses may be set to a musical rhythm. Joseph Addison, at least, thought so:

> What though in solemn silence all
> Move round the dark terrestrial ball?
> What though nor real voice nor sound
> Amidst their radiant orbs be found?
> In reason's ear they all rejoice,
> And utter forth a glorious voice;
> Forever singing as they shine,
> "The hand that made us is divine!"

Robert A. Ashworth

There are two descriptions of the processes of nature in God's Word which at first thought seem to contradict one another. "We know," writes Paul, "that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." That suggests that some of the consequences of the processes of law cause sorrow and suffering. But the poet of the book of Job declares that when the foundations of the earth were fastened and the cornerstone thereof was laid, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy!" This suggests that the foundations of the world were laid in song, and that its whole structure is mortared in music. The incidence of natural law may bring pain to some but a world of chance and accident is unthinkable, and law is the product of benevolent love and ultimately makes for the welfare of all God's creatures who observe it. Even his physical statutes may become our song.

The benevolence of the divine law is also clearly evident in the moral realm. The statutes of God are strict and severe. It is a narrow way, said Jesus, that leads to life, hedged about with restrictions. But the law of God is not arbitrary. All these commandments are given to us for our own good always, that he may preserve us alive. "All's law, yet all's love."

This conviction should determine our attitude. When it was reported to Thomas Carlyle that Margaret Fuller, our New England transcendentalist, had remarked, "I accept the universe!" the dour old Scotchman replied, "Gad, she'd better!" But everything depends upon how we accept the universe. A sullen submission to the divine statutes as to a compulsion that cannot be avoided brings only a brooding resentment, but when the will of God for us is accepted and appropriated as our own will for ourselves, life becomes an anthem of praise. We must learn to go the second mile with God. Then we share the experience of the psalmist: "Thy statutes are my song as I wander through the world." In the book of Chronicles we are told that when the temple was cleansed under Hezekiah, he "commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar." Now the burnt offering was the symbol of dedication to God, and we read that "when the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also." It is always so: the song starts where sacrifice begins, and the dedicated life is a tuneful life.

Redemption Is Joyous!

The business of redemption is a joyous business for both God and men. Every step in it is associated with song. When Jesus was born a chorus of angels sang above the plains of Bethlehem. When a sinner repents there is joy in heaven. The Father welcomes the returning prodigal into no house of gloom, for when he drew near he heard "music and dancing"! And when the redeemed arrive in the city that God has prepared for them, there is a new song ready for their lips, and I imagine that one of the first tasks that heaven will set will be the learning of it.

I have said enough, perhaps, to illustrate the psalmist's philosophy of life. Let me sum it up. It is a profound philosophy, and practical, too. Life is, first, law; and law involves compulsion. We cannot get away from law; we disregard it at our peril. But if life is primarily law, it may have in it also the lilt of song. We may sing while we obey God's laws. "It is my meat and my drink to do the will of my Father who is in heaven."

There can be no song without statutes. Melody is based on rhythm, and rhythm is subject to law. But when law is set to music it loses all its constraint. Some pedant came to Tennyson one day and said, "See, I have been studying your poems, and these are the principles of meter and prosody which you have observed." Tennyson looked them over and said: "You are right; these appear to be the laws that I have obeyed; but I have been quite unconscious of them." A lawless world, if such a thing is conceivable, would be an unutterably discordant world. The highest freedom is freedom within law.

And just as there is no song without statutes, so there need be no statutes without a song. Indeed, like

the psalmist, you may make a song out of the statutes. I remember that as a boy I learned the list of the kings of England, which as a set task was mere drudgery. But some friend of youth had put it into verse, which greatly delighted me. Some one, so to speak, had set the statutes to music for boys and girls. All the commandments of God should commonly be sung, not said.

It is surely the function of religion to make the statutes into song and set them to music, to wed words to score—and then hold singing classes everywhere! And I think this might be the refrain to every stanza of this "Song of God's Statutes": "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."

Where Love Begins

By William E. Gilroy

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. I John 4:10.

"CHRISTIANITY," said my friend, "begins with love to God—a very illogical procedure, for (quoting John), 'If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?'" And he proceeded to eulogize the original Abou Ben Adhem, and the Abou Ben Adhems of life.

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel, writing in a book of gold:—
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?"—The vision raised its head,
And, with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the Angel. Abou spake more low,
But cheerily still; and said, "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."

The angel wrote and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blest,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

My friend's words were intended as an attack, for he had abandoned the vessel of Christian faith. It would not be right to say that he had made shipwreck, for he had taken with him much that was essential, and he professed a new freedom and satisfaction in what he had found. Above all, he was a man of sincere and truth-loving character, with capacity for self-sacrifice, and with aspiration for service. He was a man of love, and as we were both young men, fired with passionate idealism, there was a bond of brotherhood between us, though his love was taking to itself the symbols of a vague and generalized socialism, and mine, though in the atmosphere of a developing liberalism, was still attached to ideas and symbols essentially Christian.

There was also between us the bond of a common experience of crisis in personal religious life. We had both passed through the fires, and the fires had burned away much that we had assumed or trusted. My own experiences through the crisis had been too slow, complex and non-spectacular to demand attention, but my friend had the soul of a poet and the emotional religion of our backwoods environment had so played upon his high-strung nature as to land him either upon the heights of vision and glory, or in the slough of despond.

An orphan, son of a French mother, he was one of many, who had been sent from year to year from old England to find homes on Canadian farms. His foster parents had treated him kindly, sent him to school, and he was now schoolmaster in the backwoods village where he had worked as a farm hand. Tall and slim, with a serious and intellectual air, and with evidences of an unduly sensitive nature, he seemed strangely placed in his environment. He used to send me snatches of poetry, strong, unimitative fragments, with marked individuality, intense in their honesty, but almost morbid in their resentment against the narrow limitations of his life, and the denial of the larger privileges and opportunities that he would so vastly have enjoyed and justified.

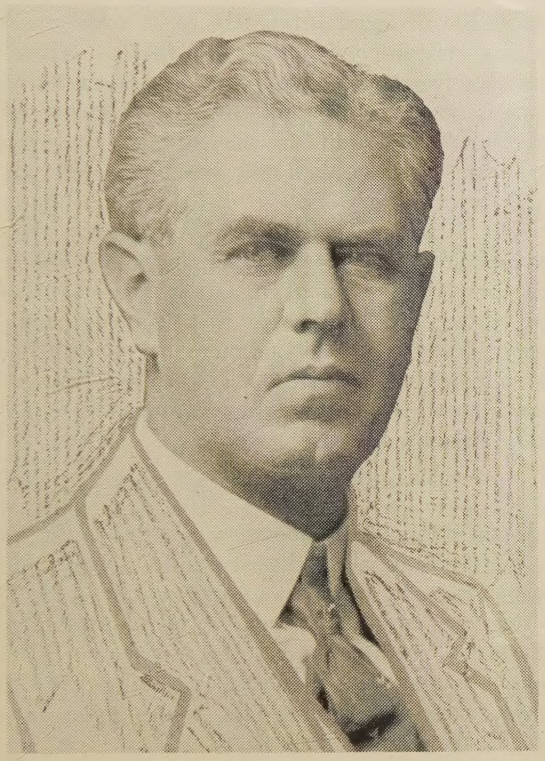
A Conversion

A few years before the time of our acquaintance, when a lad at high school, he had had a religious experience that had exploited to the full his dreamy and intense nature. A revival had been going on in the village—a typical revival of the old sort—a continuity of emotional outbursts and appeals, which I once heard described as a "religious drunk." The young orphan was profoundly impressed. He was under tremendous conviction, and troubled about his own soul. And then, one day, as he was praying in the hayloft, he had seen the barn roof literally opened, and a strange light had shone in; and that was his conversion.

It had all been as real to him as the experience of Paul on the way to Damascus, but from that extreme of emotionalism, and possibly morbidity, he had now passed to the other extreme of skepticism. He scoffed at the whole experience of his "conversion" as an illusion; and in that light he was disposed to regard much of the records of the New Testament, and of professed religious experience. Clean and honest in character, he had found in socialistic ideals—he was hardly versed in doctrinaire socialism and party platforms—a satisfaction for the inward craving of a religious nature.

If not actually as anti-Christian as he professed to be, he liked to assume to the full the note of challenge and the character of skepticism in controversy. And I am not sure but this tendency was, probably unconsciously, fostered in him by the contrast in our personalities and situations. I had just come, fresh from college, to begin my ministry in a sparsely settled home mission field, some miles farther into the backwoods, and our meeting had followed a Sunday's visit and

sermon, in the Methodist church of the little village, where he taught school. I think that I personified the things that he had missed. I was conscious of the fact that he would have made far better use of the advantages of college training than I had, and I so deeply admired in him elements of ability and genius, which I knew had been denied me, that I was unaware of any note of condescension in my relations toward him. It is possible, however, that the callow confidence and assurance of the new college graduate, eminently ready to settle all the problems of life, irritated him. In spite of an innate courtesy, I am sure that he resented



William E. Gilroy

many things about me, and I suspect that he resented my religious faith. It had cost me something, and I think it was more real and fire-proven than he supposed, but I think that, to him, it looked a little too easy and positive.

Hard and literalistic doctrines of the atonement were, in those days, as much the ground of difficulty and controversy, as the hard and literalistic ideas of the Bible, in which these doctrines found anchorage. I remember my friend asking me once, if an honest man would want another to die for his sins. It was typical of the way his mind was working, and of the thrusts that he was always giving—for when we could not meet, and talk, we corresponded.

What Love Comes First?

It is this question of the precedence of love, however, or of which love comes first, love to God, or love to man, that I specially recall. All love is, of course, redemptive. Love is the great redemptive fact, or principle; and the consciousness of this will lead some to exclaim, What is the difference? How can it matter what phase of love is most emphasized, or given logical precedence? Is not a man who is full of love to his fellows, and who is sincerely and wisely expressing that love, doing far more for the redemption of the world, than a man who professes to believe in a splendid and logically correct doctrine of grace, whose practical life gives little witness to his love, and to his fine theories of redemption? That is unanswerable logic of practical life, and yet, I cannot but think that the matter is important, and that these questions relate to the exceptional rather than the normal. A man may wield, and be, a great force for redemption, in spite of his theories, but is it not better that a man should be, and wield, a great redemptive force because of his theories? The test of our thinking, and our ability to put first things first—which is really the great end of thinking—is not found in the moment, nor in an occasional character, but in the great stream of ultimate influence on vision and character. Allowing always for the fact that paradox plays havoc with us all, that the theories of men strangely belie their lives, and their lives, their theories.

First—the Love of God

So, I replied to my friend, that though there was much point in his attack in so far as it applied to current Christianity, which was often loveless and regardless of men, true Christianity began neither with love to God, nor with love to man, but with the love of God. And I went on to point out to him that love had little meaning as a principle of conduct, until it had first of all some meaning in the soul, as an ideal, or element of worship. What does it mean to say to a man: "Love your neighbor as yourself"? What does it mean to say to man: "Love God"? The worth and validity of the latter command depend entirely upon the God whom a man loves. If a man love a false god, the more intense his love the farther will he go astray. So also, a man cannot love his neighbor as himself for any good and noble result, until he has learned to love himself—that is, until he has found the worth and value of his own soul, as a spiritual fact in a spiritual universe. All great love, and all great living, begin in discovery, in revelation, in some commanding fact, conviction, or experience that establishes an ideal and lights the way.

It is true that when light and vision fail, the simple practice of the deeds and precepts of love is itself a means of restoration. Frederick W. Robertson, in the darkness of doubt and despondency, came to the place where all he could say was: "It must be right to do right"; and standing upon that principle he worked his way back to a satisfying faith. But even that principle involved an ideal. Could Robertson have been so sure that it was right to do right, if there had not been somewhere deep in his soul the sense of a sanction (note the meaning of the word), a sense of holiness, a glimmering of God?

When Manson, in Charles Rann Kennedy's play, "The Servant in the House," found the way of redemption in service, and in the symbolic task of cleaning the drains, a sense of vision, a spiritual discovery, sent him to his task, and gave him his social gospel.

The vision, the discovery, was the cause, and not the result of the service—though here we are in a world of interaction and counter-influence.

Ultimately it makes a great deal of difference whether we approach men with the message, "Love one another," "Love God"; or with the message, "God loves you," "God is love." Jesus primarily did not give men a command, but a gospel. And the command grows out of the gospel. It is a "new" commandment —a matter of spiritual vision and privilege, rather than a codified precept. What does it mean to go to men in the slums, to the outcast and fallen, or to go to those in the high and less accessible places of life, the haunts of power, and luxury and success, where worldly ambition directs and selfishness reigns, and say to all such: "Love one another," or "Love your neighbor as yourself"? What is the use of talking about loving his neighbor as himself to a man who has neither love nor respect for his own soul? It is a new sense of values, a new idea of their own worth, and of the worth of their fellows, that such men need. The only thing that can shake them from their dominant and selfish mastery, or from the lethargy of defeat, is the consciousness of a great call, a new sanction, such as is found in the gospel of a loving God. If men can be made to feel the love of God, there is hope that their love to their fellows can be made worth while. Let us put our theology in three words: "God is love." It is a man's primary and fundamental relation to love that determines his usefulness and destiny, in personal salvation and in the redemption of the world. "Get Right With God" was the slogan of a widespread revival campaign. Were some of us right or wrong in resenting a suggestion of cant in the way the expression was used, and in thinking that that particular revival would have had a little more evidence of thoroughness and practical godliness if its slogan had been, "Get Right With Man"? I cannot say. A good phrase, however it may be degraded, need not be cant to a sincere soul; but if we could transfer the sides of the equation, "God is love," and say, "Get Right With Love," we should be near the heart of gospel experience for the individual and for society.

This Is a Lost World!

The glorious gospel of the grace of God is the profound heritage of the church and ministry, for a lost world. Do not let us forget that the world we are in is a lost world. One does not need to be a gloomy pessimist to believe it. It is a world growing better, and a world for which there is hope. But the idea that the world is in a partial and imperfect stage of evolution does not explain everything. From the standpoint of a high ideal and a right way, both individuals and society are "lost." Who can read the great works of literature with their tragic studies of sin and disaster, or the daily papers with their revelation of what life is in high places and low, without realizing that we are in a world that needs saving? It is not a command, or a precept that the world needs, but a gospel of "good news"—a discovery that will revolutionize our ways of thinking and acting.

We become so impatient about the demands for "the old gospel," by those who mean "the old theology," that we forget that it is none the less the gospel, as Jesus proclaimed it, that is fundamental to all worthy human activity.

If "God is love," the one supreme task for the Christian minister—and every Christian should be a "minister"—is to proclaim the message and meaning of love. The deepest and grandest thing that the Christian minister has to declare to men is not, "Love one another," but "God loves you." John 3:16 is still the vital, basal fact in a world seeking and needing the practical manifestation of love in human relations. All ethical life is found ultimately to be religious, if we go deep enough to find the foundations. Hence it is that "the first, and great" commandment according to Jesus is not: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," but "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

First, is the redemptive love—God is love; next is the soul's response, the whole moving of the life in love and consecration; and then, is the inevitable issue of love, divine and human, in that whole-hearted, passionate devotion to one's fellows, that John defines as the sublime characteristic of Christian experience: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

A Weakness in Liberalism

Is not our modern liberalism apt to be just a little weak, where the old orthodoxy, in its noblest manifestations at least, was somewhat strong? Here is the closing verse of a little poem, "A Hymn of Praise," by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, that appeared in "Fellowship," the magazine that the late B. Fay Mills published, in his ultra-liberal days, before he lapsed again into Presbyterian orthodoxy:

O bless the Lord for the sunshine fair
Of the world-light, wide and new!
And as for the load that we used to bear—
Man's sin—God's wrath—and Hell's despair—
Thank God it is not true!

Is not that, in all frankness, a sort of Christian Science in a world of moral diseases? Look at the sunshine, and you will not see the slum! The old orthodoxy overdid the matter of hell's despair, and it buried the love of God beneath his wrath; perhaps, too, it over-dogmatized about man's sinful nature; but in its noblest exponents it did make a fine effort to bear the burden of man's sin. Is that burden slight? Is it not to be borne? Has the 53d chapter of Isaiah no meaning for today? Are there to be no suffering servants and saviors, but only ethically-inclined persons, living in an atmosphere of ecstatic optimism?

Old Sandy Mackaye, in Kingsley's "Alton Locke," was far from being an orthodox person, but as he looked out upon life he sensed its central tragedy: "Drunkards frae the breast! harlots frae the cradle! damned before they're born! John Calvin had an inkling o' the truth there, I'm a'most driven to think, wi' his reprobation deevil's doctrine."

I am a liberal of the liberals. The quotation will not be misunderstood, or used too literally against me. It seems to me to express that which every man feels when he looks deeply into the heart of the world—the need of a gospel, of which the truth, power and glory, are adequate to meet the tragedy. If there is such a gospel, it is Christ's gospel of a gracious God. The world's hope is not in the proclamation of an ideal that can only mock man's helplessness and despair. It is primarily in the proclamation of a fact, and the revelation of a spirit, that can lift man to new experiences and to new heights of endeavor. If there be no spirit of love at the very center and soul of the universe there is little real foundation for, or incentive toward, love as a reality in human living.

Christianity is eminently logical and practical in beginning with the love *of* God.

Tales Told by the Tourists

By Dan B. Brummitt

. . . *some new thing.* *Acts* 17:21.

THE more the world's habits change, the more are they the same thing. Today's travelers bring from their journeyings more varied reports than Paul brought to Athens, but the setting of his great day in Athens is familiar enough to us. Here's a tourist; he has tales to tell. Gather around, everybody.

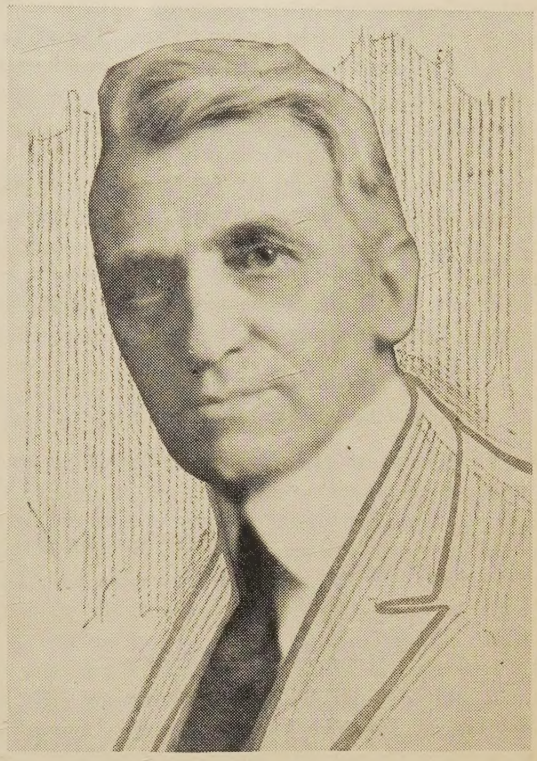
Even the greater readiness of the traveler to speak than that of his audience to hear is not new. The story of Mars Hill seems to make the Athenians almost provokers of a man rather reluctant to say anything. But whenever was Paul reluctant? The idlers and the philosophers, and such others as were about, had more than an inkling that this man was in search of an audience.

The likeness holds even in the expectations of the crowd. There was a man who had journeyed in far lands, who had seen life lived amid strange and no doubt more interesting surroundings. It was in no way remarkable that he should be a setter forth of strange doctrines. The traveler who has no alien custom to recommend, no exotic excellence to compare with home-grown mediocrities, might as well have stayed at home, and saved his time and trouble. Today's tourist reporter may not please his hearers with his praise of Italy or Russia or England, but he will be surer of an audience than if he had no more to say than that after all America is the best land of all.

This interaction of traveler and stay-at-home is a phenomenon as old as travel itself. It is an experience in which the whole tribe can share—the venturesome voyager and the homekeeping majority which takes its travel vicariously.

We make heroes of our travelers—Marco Polo, Ponce de Leon, Francis Drake, Captain Cook, Cortez —or was it Balboa?—Magellan, Henry M. Stanley, Admiral Byrd. We have made fortunes for the professionals: the Stoddards, the Holmeses, the Newmans. And how we love the romancing travelers—the Baron Munchausens and the Sir John Mandevilles!

And now traveling has become touring; everybody has been abroad, or is going. Equipped with camera



Dan B. Brummitt

and fountain pen, and a little scornful of guide books, the tourist multitude fares forth with laudable purpose to get away from the beaten paths and to bring back stories which nobody else will be able to duplicate.

We are all aware of Westminster and Versailles. The Channel crossing is commonplace now, even when made by air. We have seen or been shown the Coliseum by moonlight and the Alps at sunrise. We have fed the pigeons in the piazza before St. Mark's, and have shared in the glamour of the Grand canal.

The Tourist Multitudes

So today's sophisticated tourist, shrewd merchant that he is, selects his wares with an eye to what the conducted tripper does not see and what the educational movies cannot show. He becomes an amateur sociologist, publicist, investigator.

It is possible to group what he has to say under four labels that do not appear on his much-labeled luggage. His stories have to do with the behavior of whole peoples under new or newly-increased social and political and economic stress.

One series of his traveler's tales deals with his discovery that the Old World has a new concern for the

widening of its loyalties. He has been in Hyde Park on Empire day, and has heard the spokesman of Great Britain addressing by radio the scattered units of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Never, even in the great days of the empire, he will tell you, did the British race feel so strongly the pull of the blood-bond. The old lion and his cubs were never so much aware of each other and of their mutual interests as now.

Or our traveler has been to Geneva. He can tell of the hundred concerted activities of the League of Nations and the International Labor Office. He will admit that the League is not all its American advocates had hoped, but even so, is it not producing a unity of action in many a cause which but for Geneva would still be one of the world's forlorn hopes?

If he has ventured as far as Palestine, he will have something to say for Zionism, with its new emphasis on the unity of the Jewish people. And, though the dream has faded somewhat since Briand's death, our tourist reporter will almost certainly tell us that there is still a good deal of vitality in the thought of a United States of Europe.

Mutual Aid in Application

Another group of travelers' tales has to do with the immense increase in the actual application of the mutual aid idea. Perhaps the tourist was at the International Rotary convention in Vienna, and can enlarge on what these practical folk the Rotarians have been compelled to do by the sheer pressure of their not too idealistic philosophy.

He went to a London labor exchange, and saw the dole in operation. He will tell you that not only has the dole saved England from measureless calamities, but it has actually put into effect, on a national scale, a precept which yesterday was either a counsel of perfection or a cloak for the pauperizing of the desperately poor: that the strong should bear the burdens of the weak.

He has seen this in the Karl Marx houses of Vienna; in the bewildering network of cooperatives that binds into strong associations all manner of producers and consumers, from Ireland to the Black sea; in old age pensions and manifold mutual insurance schemes which continue their self-respecting work amid all the turmoil of today's Europe.

Still more impressive are the reports brought to us of the Old World's new zest for mass-conversion. Passing by such incidentals—though they are full of significance—as the Turk's shift from fez to fedora, and the discarding by his womankind of the traditional veil, the reporter will wax eloquent on what social regimentation can do for a people.

He will enlarge on the new Turkish zeal for literacy, and the new alphabet which makes it effective. He will tell enthusiastic stories of the transformations which Italy exhibits.

"Why," he will say, "I heard a man put it in a single sentence: 'Mussolini has lifted the Italian chin three inches'; and, by all that is wonderful, it's true!" Naples minus smells; Rome minus beggars; trains on time; travelers protected against extortion; the proud Fascist salute everywhere evidencing a new morale and an access of new purpose.

If our friend managed to get into Russia, we must be prepared for anything. But whatever Russia has done to him, it has made him an authority on the great experiment. He may approve or he may condemn; he is sure to say that Russia can no longer be ignored by the thoughtful American, especially in times like these. For, he will tell us, here are a hundred and sixty million people acting—or being forced to act, according to his viewpoint—practically as one body, in government, and in the production, the distribution, and the consumption of life's necessities.

But of all the impressions which the traveler may have received during his wanderings in Western Europe, the deepest are those he has brought back from the war zone and the countries whence the armies went out to battle. Europe, he reports, is far more war-conscious than we are. It has the battlefields, yes; but also it has the human debris of the war, the endless miles of soldiers' graves, and the innumerable war memorials, from the cross in the village market place to the Cenotaph in Whitehall.

The Unknown Soldier dominates the Victor Emmanuel Memorial in Rome, the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, and Westminster Abbey, even more than he does the cemetery at Arlington. His grave is near the hurrying feet of men and the unresting tides of a city's life. Edith Cavell is more arresting than Nelson's monument in Trafalgar Square, and Edinburgh's grim Castle Rock has greater glories now than the records of the Stuarts.

What does it all mean? our tourist asks; and then supplies the answer: Sacrifice, devotion to the brink of death and beyond, the final self-offering—these today are commonplaces to millions whom the church's message of consecration never reached!

At this point he may become hortatory; the church needs to consider these facts. "Don't you see?" he asks; "Europe is at work practicing brotherhood and the sharing of life; it has caught the secret of conversion, and puts it to work on a nation-wide scale; it takes the idea of sacrifice as a matter of course, and on it builds the future."

Let us not dampen our friend's ardor, nor even question the accuracy of his deductions from his observed phenomena. What he has seen is striking, arresting and full of fascination. But he is no Paul on Mars Hill; he brings us no tremendous revelation of unexpected and largely unwelcome truth.

Glimpsing a Golden Age

What he has seen has appeared many times in the history of our race. Repeatedly men and nations have caught glimpses of a golden age, and have tried to imprison the splendor in institutions, policies, and customs.

And, in times when the authentic vision is withheld from eyes that do not wish to see, those eyes turn to the simulations of men who put a price-tag on virtue and make religion as well as patriotism the slave of traffics which could not stand the light.

Or we set up our altars to this virtue and that, extolling now service, now brotherhood, now mutual help, now sacrifice; oblivious of the great implications which are back of these detached and often calculated excellences.

What power is in the loyalties which, however wide, are yet held within boundaries? The farthest-flung empire is exclusive as well as inclusive; every predetermined brotherhood erects barriers at its frontiers. An accent, or a line on a map, or the color of a flag, can come between man and man. But there is one who sends his messenger to say that God hath made of one blood all men.

"Ye Must Be Born Again"

What is there in conversion, in mass or otherwise, if it is no more than obedience to the beat of a drum or the edict of a council? Not so is the dross of self to be transmuted to the gold of a new life:—ye must be born again.

It is possible to be grateful for every evidence of unselfishness and every form of altruism, without accepting these as authentic marks of the new earth. For men have set bounds even here. The physician is held to one code, while the druggist may operate by another; we condemn in a policeman what we commend in a banker. But there is one who long ago said: "If any man will be great among you, let him be your minister."

And sacrifice? Is not every memorial of the war's glorious dead a solemn mockery? The men whom Germany remembers with pride and sorrow, and the men of whom France says they died on the field of honor, were they not flung at each other's throats, though they had no quarrel and no cause to kill? Over many a place of the war dead the stonecutter has written in granite, "Greater love hath no man than this!" not discerning the deeper truth of the words.

When our tourist claims for the symptoms he has observed that they are auguries of a coming religion of humanity, it is the traveler of Athens who courteously rebukes him: "I perceive you are very religious"—in the number of your altars!

And then Paul the traveler becomes Paul the teacher, with much to say to all these our explorers who have discovered great ethical meanings in these movements of the modern world. "Let me tell you of my Master," he says. "All this, so far as any of it is real and not a cunningly devised substitute, is part of something of his, far more wonderful and complete. He put it together into a scheme of the life that is life indeed. Whom therefore ye unknowingly worship, him, therefore, declare I unto you."

The World Has Not Overtaken Jesus!

What need is there to labor the point? By whatever formula we confess this Jesus whom Paul preached, and whatever men may think concerning the revelations of God which have come since that day in Mars Hill, the world has not yet overtaken him. When it girds itself for some supreme effort at living beyond its adjustments and its compromises with life, the most it can achieve is some halting approach to a fragment of his teaching.

In a Roman plaza is a statue to Giordano Bruno, burned at the stake on that very spot three centuries gone, by a church which then had power of life and death.

When the treaty between the Pope and the Italian state was made, some three years ago, there were those who suggested that the Bruno monument, naturally distasteful as it must be to every churchman who passed it as he crossed the square, might now be taken down. Its removal could but increase the good feeling between church and state which now it was every Italian's duty to foster.

Mussolini spoke of this one day, in the course of a great speech, explaining the new relationship of Vatican and Quirinal. "The suggestion has been made," he said, "but it will not be acted upon. Giordano Bruno has paid the price for the place he occupies!"

And so it is of Jesus. He, in a sense far transcending Bruno's brave acceptance of his lot, has paid the price for the place he occupies.

Which price entitles him to this at least, that the world, when it borrows from him, piecemeal, this grace and that strength, this value and that beauty, shall be reminded of its debt. And more; that men shall be confronted with him and with his adequacy, his modernity, his completeness.

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.

Getting God Into Our Scheme of Things

By W. B. Creighton

I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever. Psalm 52:8.

WE do not know who it was that penned those words centuries ago but we are apt to think that, whoever he was, he could find trust and faith a great deal easier than we are finding them today. We think of him as living in a much smaller and more comfortable, a more intimate and more friendly universe than ours, a world in which the very limits of knowledge would help to make trust a simpler and more natural thing. No doubt it is possible to exaggerate the difference, but certainly this we do know, it is a tremendously difficult thing for us to say what he said, say it with the utter confidence and conviction, the joyous assurance that seemed to move him.

In the first place, it is very difficult for us to find God, to be sure that we have him, that he is somehow in this great universe of ours so real that we can

reach and know him, and so much like ourselves that our trust in him is possible and the one thing he desires and longs for. Sometimes our age is accused of being atheistic, and boldly and blatantly so, but there was never uttered a bigger falsehood. No day in the history of the world ever longed for a sure conviction and certainty of God as ours does. And it is not to be set down against us that we find it hard to come at him; a multitude of things have conspired to make that inevitable. The one thing that could be set down against us would be our giving up our search for him.

And that, surely, we must not do. A world without God, without a God, too, something after the fashion of the Father of whom Jesus talked so intimately, is so much poorer and meaner a thing that for that reason, as well as for other and better ones, we must not let him go. Our humanist friends insist sometimes that it is a much braver and finer thing to go through life without any positive faith in a personal God, of whom we can never be sure, living nobly all the while and standing firm upon our own two feet, than to insist that we must stay life upon a conviction of a Divine Being who cares and helps. But the argument carries us too far and quite away from some of the most fundamental facts of human life and experience. If man could live without God he would have got rid of him long ago, for his thought of him has been as often a distress as a comfort, but the effort to get rid of him has not worked, and is not working today, and apparently never will work. A man here and there may think he succeeds but the race has no such illusion.

God As a Conviction

Is it possible to become reasonably sure of God, to have him as a solid conviction and something more than a haunting hope and yearning? If it is, we ought to seek to come to that with all the determination and earnestness and persistence that we can possibly muster. There is nothing that we need more. There is nothing that could come to the world today that would do it so much good as a fresh and vivid and unshakable conviction of God. There are wrong thoughts of him still in many quarters, and that is bad enough, but the one great paralyzing fact about the religious life of today is that God is so shadowy and unreal and unconvincing. He ought to mean tremendously and he doesn't; he ought to be the living corner-stone of the whole structure and he isn't; he ought to be the one thing in the whole universe that we are sure of and the most we do is faintly to trust some fairy hope or dream about him.

How shall we find our way to a better and surer and stronger faith in God? Will it help us any to remind ourselves of Jesus' attitude toward him and of what he said and taught? Some might say that that was somewhat begging the question, but we will not admit it. With Jesus God was not only a fact; he was the one great fact that counted. He always thought of himself in relation to his Father. So far from Jesus thinking that there was any virtue or value in his standing upon his own feet and bravely living his own life after that supposedly noble fashion the humanists talk about, he seemed to think that apart from God he had no feet to stand upon, that anything he was able to do he did because God was with him and in him, and that partnership, which necessitated the reality and existence of God quite as much as his own, was the fundamental fact of his life.

Can We Prove God?

Now we can say, of course, that all this that Jesus said, and which he so manifestly believed with all his soul, had no fact or reality back of it. But what is

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involved in that? Simply this, that in that case he was a simple minded Galilean peasant prating nonsense, and that is a role, try as we will, we cannot make him fit into. We may not always be able to understand Jesus, and sometimes his teaching puzzles us with its apparent inconsistencies and paradoxes, but we can have no possible doubt as to his faith in God. He believed in him with all the intensity of a nature that seemed altogether unique in its strength and wisdom and integrity; he believed in him not only as the God of the whole earth but also as the Father of the spirits of all the sons of men; he believed in him with an assurance of faith that would seem never to have been surpassed in the whole mental and moral history of the universe. We cannot get away from the fact that to this, apparently the richest, surest, finest soul of all history, God was a supreme and a glorious fact. That may not be logical proof, but may it not be something even more convincing!

And that phrase, "logical proof," indicates where

part of our trouble lies, that we find it so hard to have a real and energizing faith in the existence and reality of God. Our mood is for a demonstrated proof of God and his existence and goodness, and that we can never have. But we ought to realize that even if we could have it it would be of all possible demonstrations the least satisfactory, the least usable, the least vitally convincing. We can demonstrate a scientific formula and add something to our intelligent understanding of things thereby, but for the reasons that we need God a demonstration after that fashion would do us no conceivable good. We are never likely to get any more convincing proof that God is than the one that comes to us from that fact of which we have been thinking, the fact that we can never stop thinking about him, we can never get away from the idea of him. The old Persian poet got the idea perfectly:

He prayed, but to his prayer no answer came,
And choked within him sank his ardor's flame.
No more he prayed, no more the knee he bent,
While round him darkened doubt and discontent;
Till in his room one eve there shone a light
And he beheld an angel-presence bright,
Who said, "O faint-heart, why hast thou resigned
Praying, as though thy God were deaf and blind?"
"I prayed," he said, "but nothing won by prayer,
Long disappointment has induced despair."
"Fool!" cried the angel, "every prayer of thine
Of God's immense compassion was a sign;
Each cry of thine, 'O Lord!' itself contains
The answer, 'Here am I'; thy very pains,
Ardor and love and longing and each tear
Are His attraction, prove Him very near."

The fact that man has prayed, that century after century and age after age he has continued to pray, often in spite of himself; and that he has continued to find something in it—strength and courage and patience and faith and hope and help for living and for dying—would seem to say, unless the universe is founded in uncertainties and lies, that somewhere, somehow there is a God to listen and to help. And in this connection there is this very reassuring fact, the man who persists in praying, even with all the misgivings and uncertainties that may fill his mind in days like these, is the man who is surest of God and finds utter disbelief in him an impossibility.

Difficulties in Belief

Can we then, follow the psalm-writer of those many centuries ago and pass on to that idea of God as one in whom we may fully trust and upon whose mercy and loving-kindness we may build for ever and ever? And here, of course, we have our multiplied difficulties. Not only is there the fact of the suffering and tragedy and the misery with which the world is filled, and that makes belief in supreme goodness and love so difficult, but there is also the other distressing fact that the process of the triumphing of good in the earth is slow and labored and difficult. We think we are making progress only to discover that the ideal state we have labored for isn't ideal at all and we wonder sometimes whether from age to age we are making any real progress at all. If God is omnipotent and all-good why does the growth of goodness come so slowly and with such difficulty in the earth?

But perhaps part of our difficulty just here comes from a mistaken emphasis upon that idea of the omnipotence of God. In a world such as ours, where man with his regal will is the crown and glory of creation, there must be a great many things that God cannot do. It may be hard for us to reconcile that with some other thoughts we have of God, and yet we can at least faintly see why it must be so. And why it is better that it should be so, too. For instance, we can faintly see why it might be better, not that disease, from which so much of our human suffering comes, should be wiped out with one beneficent stroke from the hand of the great physician, but rather be slowly overcome and conquered by the patience and self-sacrifice and noble faith of a multitude of men and women. Aside from the end to be reached, the process seems to have very great value. It helps the growth of a whole series of virtues and gives us Albert Schweitzers and a whole host of humble, faithful men and women whose great ambition is to serve the human good. And so we can also faintly see that it might be better that mankind should learn goodness, not in some cut-and-dried or miraculous way but by the slow process of disappointments with the wrong and evil thing and the slow mastery and triumphing of the good. Here again the process must have real values that could not possibly be reached in any other way.

God Is in Man's Struggle

It must be in some strange way that we cannot possibly understand that God himself is with mankind in all his struggle up to that which is better and more worthy, that he shares the pain and the disappointment and distress of it all, and that to him triumphing and victory must mean more than they possibly can to us. And therefore it must be that he is committed to the enterprise, and has set his purpose to its glorious succeeding in a way that the best man on earth can never possibly do. This does not mean that he can or ever will take the task out of our hands, or work spectacular miracles for its achieving, but it does mean that no good man or woman to the longest day of human history shall ever plan anything for the good of his fellows or cherish one kindly or helpful thought but that God himself shall share it with him and help him in it. And if we can put that stable, solid thought into the weak and oftentimes seemingly ineffectual efforts that we make for the bettering of the world and the helping of men, who knows what may not come of them! If only we could get God into our scheme of life more fruitfully!

As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the watery sod,
Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness of God:
I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-hen flies
In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt the marsh and the skies:
By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in the sod
I will heartily lay me a hold on the greatness of God.

Iron Bars

By Paul S. Leinbach

He hath cut the bars of iron in sunder. Psalm 107:16.

HERE is the most encouraging and inspirational view of history that is possible to the human mind. It is a process with a purpose and a goal, a process in which a loving Father is working out his plan for his children. The Spirit of God is the great liberator. The Emancipation Proclamation by Abraham Lincoln "struck the shackles from four million slaves." But the greatest of all such proclamations was that given by Jesus when he said: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Our Lord spoke of unregenerate men as captives, confined behind prison doors, and he came to "proclaim liberty to them that are bound." As by the brooding of the spirit order was brought out of primeval chaos; as by divine guidance the children of Israel were led out of Egypt into the Promised Land—so the spirit of man is, by the grace of God, brought out of weakness into strength, out of ignorance into knowledge, out of folly into wisdom, out of deadening superstition into a living faith, out of sin and selfishness into love and service. The bars which bind him may indeed be of iron, strong, cruel, seemingly unyielding, but one by one the fetters are broken, and we behold the evolution of the body, the emancipation of the mind, the enlargement of the heart. Though surrounded by foes and paralyzed by fears, our hearts so "cribbed, cabined and confined" that we can "neither run nor go to find eternal joys," those who surrender to the guidance of the Divine Spirit are translated from the bondage of fear into the glorious liberty of the children of God. A world so full as ours is today of intellectual pessimism and moral cynicism needs to hear and heed this triumphant assurance: "He cutteth the bars of iron in sunder."

One of the writer's best beloved teachers, Dr. Richard C. Schiedt, recently said this fine thing of George Washington: "When he won a battle, he never lost his head; and when he lost a battle, he never lost heart." How that convicts many who have proved false to their high heritage! In a time of unsurpassed material prosperity, when apparently we were winning our battles, most of us lost our heads; and today, when we are passing through the shadows, only too many are proving that they are not the spiritual sons of Washington, because they have lost heart, and are giving way to cowardice, despair and suicide. O my brothers, God is marching on! Behind the clouds the sun is shining, and we must also "march breast-forward, never doubting clouds will break."

When we think of the bars which have been most dreaded by mankind or which have most seriously hindered human progress, we note that some have reference to the life that is to come, and some to the life that now is. Let us briefly consider a few of these and note how the Spirit of God has been taking the iron out of them and has enabled men to use even the most forbidding obstacles and hindrances in their pathway as stepping-stones to higher things.

I. The Bar of Death.—This term has been forever immortalized for us by Tennyson's great poem, "Crossing the Bar." Death is thought of as the "great divide" between the here and the hereafter, and what a bar it has been to millions who were in bondage to the fear of death, shuddering before its mingled gloom and horror! The history of Christianity reveals how we have come to a nobler view of death and of the state of our departed loved ones. The "bar" is no longer viewed as a hateful and dreaded foe. It does not separate time from eternity, but bridges the road to glory. The risen Christ, who has brought life and immortality to light, has made us see that death is the door to larger life. Little by little the influence of God's grace is taking the iron out of this bar of death.

II. The Bar of Judgment.—"It is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment." This is truly a bar to proprietary rights and vested interests, to all human distinctions of wealth or prestige, or the trappings of pomp and circumstance. Suggestive to all thoughtful men was that ceremony before the catafalque of the Capuchins, when men were bearing the body of one who for almost a lifetime had been the autocratic ruler of a great nation. "Who comes here?" cried a voice from within, and the answer was given from without, "His Most Serene Majesty, Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary," etc., etc. And from within came the voice: "I know him not." The second time came the same question, with the same answer and the same result. But when the inner voice asked for the third time, "Who comes here?" the reply from without was: "A sinful man, our brother Francis Joseph." Then came the hearty invitation: "Enter!" Ah yes, so shall we all come to that judgment-seat, as poor, needy sinners. But for us who believe, the bar of iron is cut in sunder, because we shall stand there not in our own weakness, but in the strength of him who loved us and gave himself for us. He is our advocate and mediator to plead our cause, and we know that absolute justice will be interpreted by infinite mercy.

> Faith's journey ends in welcome to the weary,
> And Heaven, the heart's true home, will come at last.

And what bars of iron have been found in the life of this present world?

III. The Gilded Bar.—This bar—with the mirror—has had a sad and devastating history. Though it usually had a brass rail, it was made of iron, which entered into the souls of millions, destroyed myriad homes, and brought ruin to numberless men, sorrow and want to a vast multitude of women and children. We do not know when the first saloons, gin-mills and booze-joints were called bars, or when those who dispensed liquid damnation were first called bartenders, but after a decade and a half of prohibition we may properly remind ourselves that the life convict in Joliet

penitentiary had it exactly right when he said of the saloon:

A bar to heaven, a door to hell;
Whoever named it, named it well.
A bar to manliness and wealth,
A door to want and broken health;
A bar to honor, love and fame,
A door to grief and sin and shame;
A bar to hope, a bar to prayer,
A door to darkness and despair;
A bar to honored, useful life,
A door to brawling, senseless strife;
A bar to all that's true and brave,
A door to every drunkard's grave;
A bar to joys that home imparts,
A door to tears and aching hearts;
A bar to heaven, a door to hell;
Whoever named it, named it well.

PAUL S. LEINBACH

A score of years ago most Americans considered this infamous traffic impregnable, so strongly was it intrenched in the politics and business and habits of the nation. But the iron bars were cut in sunder, and a great nation redeemed from the curse of licensing a traffic that pandered to the vices and weaknesses of mankind. Sneer if you will at this supreme social adventure—it was and is a "noble experiment," worthy of the republic so richly blessed of God. But today thousands, misled by a specious and cunningly devised propaganda, are clamoring for a restoration of liquor, though protesting that they do not stand for a return of the saloon. Alas, a saloon by any other name would smell just as sour and do just as much dirty work. God forbid that such a disgrace should be brought upon the land we love!

IV. The Bar of the Courts.—This stands in theory for the majesty of law and the protection of life and property; it is designed to secure justice for all. Whether it is a blessing or a curse depends in practice on the character of the laws and of the courts which interpret them, and on the attitude of the people toward the law and the officers of the law. In the past many laws have been unwise and unjust, many courts ignorant and corrupt. But more and more, as men are moved by the Spirit of God, the courts become true temples of justice, tyranny and oppression are broken down, and the weak and defenseless are protected in their rights. We have not yet attained to the millennium; the law's delays are still too obvious and disastrous; the potency of precedent and technicality remains to hinder justice. The vicious cleverness of shyster lawyers continues to disgrace us. And yet there is more even-handed justice for rich and poor alike than ever before in history. We have even seen some multimillionaires and arch-racketeers serve sentences in jail, and more and more across the world the courts have been regarded as the bulwark of liberty. True, American disrespect and irreverence should be regarded as one of the greatest menaces of this generation and may cost us dear. Aided and abetted by a considerable section of the public press, disobedience to law has been flaunted as a species of heroism, and the rich and powerful, in selecting the laws they are willing to accept and sneering at those they do not like, have set an evil example which has encouraged other members of society to go and do likewise.

V. The Bar of the Prison.—After all these centuries of civilization, how many of our fellows are still confined behind iron bars! Doubtless it remains true that some are inside who ought to be outside, and many are outside who ought to be inside. Punishment for wrongdoing is necessary, first, as a deterrent, warning others against the same sins; second, as a protection for society, safeguarding us against wild beasts in human form who trample on precepts of decency and honor; and third, as a discipline and chastening for the prisoner himself. But in a real sense the work of the Spirit of God has been to substitute the idea of reclamation for the ancient idea of retribution and revenge. It is not pleasant to think of the outrages, tortures, inquisitions, and unspeakable abominations inflicted upon prisoners in bygone days. The "third degree" has been sufficiently in evidence in our own time to make believable what happened in the torture-chambers of the past. Slowly but surely a Christian penology is on the way. "I was in prison," said Jesus, "and ye visited me." How do *you* think today of those in prison? Do you think of them as outcasts, convicts and criminals who have lost their human feelings and needs, who are known no more by names but only by numbers, and who are to be cowed and subdued by harsh, cruel and inhuman treatment, in the spirit of revenge and retaliation? Or do you think of them as your "brothers in bonds," who are no longer to be subjected to foul dungeons, reeking with filth and vermin, or tortured with the thumbscrew and the rack? These men and women who have gone wrong and

sinned so greatly against society are still members of our Heavenly Father's great family. We must not regard them as hopeless, but must cherish in our hearts a holy purpose to heal, reclaim and save them. The rule of iron must be superseded by the ancient law of brotherhood.

VI. The Bar Sinister.—A cruel bar of exclusiveness created by the taint of illegitimacy or of mixed or colored blood. Here we have suggested the whole superman theory—the heartbreaking story of racial egotism, spites and hates. How the pages of history have been stained with tears and blood, what a harvest of trouble and sorrow has been reaped because of the bar sinister, in which the innocent have been made to suffer for the sins of others or for divers man-made reasons which could not stand for a moment before the bar of God's judgment! In so far as men have been moved by the Spirit of God, they have been compelled to come out of the narrow, provincial prisonhouse of racial exclusiveness and pride, into a gracious and all-comprehending world citizenship. But alas, how often we continue to give evidence of a parochial spirit, which remains utterly hostile to the mind of Christ. America should be very slow, for example, in criticizing the nationalism of an oriental nation so long as our unjust and discriminative immigration act remains on the statute books. It is resented by orientals as much as it ever was, and it ought to be. Our Father's other children across the sea cannot help feeling that when, some day, our practice conforms to our American theory, this great wrong will be undone.

VII. The Bar of Public Opinion.—No sensible man will be contemptuous of or indifferent to the judgments of society. He will, as Woodrow Wilson well put it, "pay a decent respect to the opinions of mankind." But while this is true, he will not surrender his convictions nor violate his conscience to win popular favor, nor yield to the threats of the crowd even to save his life. The perilous snare of "the fear of man" has been a bar of iron. When it has exercised a tyrannous influence on the race, it has broken the spirits of innumerable men and made them to be opportunists, lickspittles and time-servers. Don't forget that, at the bar of public opinion, the Lord Christ himself was condemned to a shameful death. "Crucify him! Crucify him!" was the verdict of the multitude. The voice of the people is not always the voice of God. Christ and his apostles proclaimed a new "declaration of independence" when they said, "We ought to obey God rather than men." "Here I stand; I can do no other; God help me!" said Martin Luther. "They may kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul," cried Ulric Zwingli. Although a five to four majority of the supreme court make a decree that citizens must subordinate their religious convictions to a majority decision of the United States congress, and although a United States senator is quoted as saying that any man who subordinates the orders of the government to the teaching of Jesus Christ should be deported, nevertheless the Holy Spirit is cutting this bar of iron in sunder, an increasing number of men are becoming more fearless and conscientious, and public opinion itself is becoming more enlightened, so that little by little we have faith to believe that the composite judgment of mankind is more in harmony with the will of God. War is condemned today, for example, by the well-nigh universal opinion of the people of all lands and races. And whatever follies politicians and diplomats may continue to commit, the urge for world peace is more potent and far-reaching than ever before. The iron cross, which has stood for the love of power, must give way to the wooden cross of Calvary, which stands for the power of love. Only when that has come to pass shall he, who came to proclaim liberty to them that are bound, "see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." As Philip Doddridge sang of the ever-coming Savior in his great advent hymn:

> He comes, the prisoners to release
> In Satan's bondage held;
> The gates of brass before him burst,
> The iron fetters yield.

The Ministry of Silence

By James H. Snowden

And when he opened the seventh seal, there followed a silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. Revelation 8:1.

I DO not know what this text means; except that this silence in heaven was useful and beautiful in its time, or the jubilant strains of that celestial life would never have been hushed for the space of half an hour. And if silence has its uses in the heavenly life, it must have its uses in the earthly life, for earth approaches perfection only as it approaches heaven.

God uses silence in nature. He unbinds the roaring cataract and rolls the thunder through the air, but he also calms the torrent into placid smoothness and stills the air in the silence of night. These moments of restful cessation in nature have their uses as well as its tumultuous activities; and as God thus works in nature, so also in providence and revelation he not only at times speaks, but also at times keeps silent.

The power of speech is one of the glories of man, but it is equally important that his tongue should be able to keep silent as to speak. The dampers that hush the strings of the piano are as essential as the hammers that make them vibrate; for silence is as necessary to music as sound. Incessant speech would be intolerable, and one spoken word may do infinite harm where silence would have been golden wisdom. There is a time to speak and a time to keep silent, and the silence may be as useful and beautiful in its time, as rich in meaning, as fruitful in growth, as full of life and joy as the most urgent and eloquent speech.

What, then, are the uses of silence? It has many uses, but I shall mention only such as may have been signified by this silence in heaven.

I.

First, it may have been the silence of rest. Heaven is a restful place, and this is one of the most comforting thoughts of the heavenly life. Yet we are not to conceive of it as a place of uninterrupted rest and eternal inactivity. Such rest would soon make us weary. Rest is a relative term and has no meaning except in connection and contrast with fatigue. There are intense activities in heaven which must be interrupted with periods of rest; and this silence in heaven when the whole vast city lay in unbroken stillness may have been the profound rest of wearied spirits.

James H. Snowden

But we are not to wait until we get to heaven for rest: we need it here. We have limited energies and cannot go far without slowing down or stopping to replenish our store. Muscles, nerves, brain and mind, after being strained and wearied, must have rest and recuperation. A disregard of the need of rest is a peculiarly American sin. There is such a feverish spirit of ambition among us, so much push and rush, that bodies and minds are breaking down under the ceaseless strife and strain. Some people rest too much—some rest all the time—but many people do not rest enough and need more silence in their lives. God has built a time of rest into the very solar system in the night that soothes the world to sleep. Jesus went apart and rested a while. The heart takes a brief rest after every beat, and there should be restful half hours in every day. Do not let life run on and keep up an everlasting din, like a limited express train that never stops, but, like an accommodation train that stops at every station, bring it to a frequent standstill, and let there be silence for about the space of half an hour.

II.

This silence in heaven may have been the silence of reserve. One theory of this silence is that it signified the reservation or concealment of the purpose of God in creation. So wise and good is this divine reserve in providence and revelation that it is the glory of God to conceal a thing. There must be infinite reserve in God. He can let us see only the outskirts of his ways, and how small a whisper do we hear of him! Jesus did not tell his disciples all he knew. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." All he said was only a hint of what he might have said. He did not make the mistake, so frequent among leaders, of talking too much. He maintained a divine reserve.

There is a large place in life for the silence of reserve. The teacher must always know more than he teaches his scholars; the painter has visions of beauty he never catches on his canvas, and the poet more poetic thought than he ever expresses in verse. The sun does not let all its light shine. Every one ought to have more in him than he ever puts out. It is the suggestion of reserve force that makes a character or speaker impressive. We never quite respect the man who tells us all he knows, and we do not want our most intimate friend to let us too far into the secrets of his life.

We must practice this reserve to some extent with our children. There are many things we cannot tell them because they cannot bear them now. We ought never to tell them anything but the truth, and when they cannot bear this we must bid them wait. We are not bound to tell all we know to anybody, but when we do speak we must tell only the truth. Silence is a mantle that would cover many of the ills of life. When Jesus was falsely accused by the chief priests, he answered them nothing. Is not this very often the best defense against misrepresentations and slanders? Do not try to run every false word down. Innocence does not need to explain everything and often harms itself by talking. When trouble arises, when a mistake is made, what will often so surely heal it as simple silence! A few days of silence in August, 1914, might have stopped the Great War! The history of many a quarrel is simply a history of too much talk. Beware of a gossiping tongue. Know more than you say. Speech is silvern, but silence is golden. Study to be quiet. And when trouble is brewing, when evil tongues are busy, when anger is rising, let there be silence about the space of half an hour.

III.

This may have been the silence of meditation and preparation. Meditation is always the soil out of which mastery of a subject grows. Facts and ideas can be put into our minds from the outside by the book or teacher, but we do not masticate and digest and assimilate them into our own mental life until we

have reflected upon them. This is the most vital part of all study and the deepest root of education. Reading may simply be a way of letting other minds do our thinking for us. We may easily do too much of it and thereby clutter up our minds and fetter our own thinking, as too much fuel may smother the fire. The student that simply knows what others have thought and has not thought anything through for himself does not know anything as he ought to know it. So with the minister who preaches reminiscences of other men's sermons, or with the Sunday school teacher who depends on what "lesson helps"—which may be lesson hindrances—say about the lesson and does not work his own way through direct study and silent meditation into its inner deeps and rich meaning. So with the citizen who knows only what his party platform and newspaper say and has no judgments of his own.

Such meditation is necessary for the growth of character. We are much given to society and excitement and show. Many want to live all the time in the glare of publicity and the whirl of pleasure. They constantly crave a crowd and are itching for a new thrill. They live on the outside and have no inner resources. They have a horror of being alone. They do not know how to keep company with themselves, and fly to others. This is a superficial life that grows shallow, feverish and fretful. Such a life is not likely to ripen and grow sweet with age, but rather sour and bitter. Solitude is the soil in which the roots of character must grow. Silence cools the pulse and clarifies the vision. A half hour of silence would often save us from mistakes and keep us true to right and duty.

Such meditation is a necessary preparation for service. Silent growth always precedes fruit. The tree pours years of hidden life into the rosy apple. The meteor gathers momentum through millions of invisible miles before it explodes in a brief flash of splendor. Every great thing somewhere has its roots in silence. Jesus took thirty years of preparation for three years of work. Let us live in society and fill our lives with intense activities, but let us also bury our roots deep in meditation and prayer that we may ripen character and mature wisdom and gather strength for the work of the world.

IV.

Once more, this may have been the silence of wonder and worship. The marvelous vision disclosed by these opened seals may well have filled the heavenly inhabitants with a sense of awe and struck the whole city silent. For there are times when speech is sacrilege and talk an impertinence. How vexatious it is when a master musician is touching the strings into matchless harmony to have silly persons sit chattering by. The first effect of a great thing, a great building, a historic scene, a great mountain with its majestic mass and impressive silence, is to hush the soul with a sense of awe. Wonder does not gabble in such a presence, but stands in reverent silence and slowly feels the mystic power.

Wonder is akin to and shades into worship, which is appreciation of the infinite worth, or "worthship," of God. If wonder, then, courts silence and grows best in stillness, how much more does worship! Mere noise and confusion are unfriendly to worship and are painful to a worshiping soul. The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him. Speech does not always help us to know God and there are times when silence brings us into more vital contact and sweeter communion with him. The mountain lake, however close it may be to the sky, reflects heaven's blue and mirrors the full-orbed image of the sun only when it lies perfectly still. And so at times we need to "be still and know that thou art God."

We live in an increasingly noisy world. The shouts of the crowd, the roar of the street and the rattle of machinery are ever in our ears. This confusion may get into our minds and down into our hearts and worry our spirits and distract and distort our vision and sense of values. We need at times to escape from the outer world into inner calm. We need society, but we equally need solitude, and it takes both to make the full-rounded sphere of life. We should not think that we must be always talking and working and rushing and fuming and fretting. "The world is too much with us," and we need worship. Let silence fall upon us at frequent intervals that we may rest and meditate and worship, that we may grow character and gather wisdom and strength, that we may immerse our souls in God, and then let us come forth strong and patient to do the work and bear the burdens of life.

"I Pray Not For the World"

By Edwin R. Errett

God so loved the world. John 3:16a.

ALMOST from infancy we have been taught the beautiful words of this text. It is easy to understand why the voice of the church has designated them the "golden text" of the Bible. We sense in them depths beyond the touch of human spiritual plummets.

Yet here is this same Gift to the world, this "only begotten Son," declaring in a prayer, "I pray not for the world"! Not content merely to leave the world out of his petition, he is, as it were, adding insult to injury by taking pains to specify it: "I pray not for the world."

Nor is it at some moment of intoxicating enthusiasm, of ebullient exhilaration. He is face to face with betrayal, with desertion by his last friend. The heavy dew of sorrow weights down every thought. The mind must grope its way through a stubbornly viscous and resilient darkness. In that hour we would know that he must have come face to face with the ultimate realities; even had we no word from John, what little spiritual sensitiveness we naturally possess would tell us that, in this sober hour, alone with God, he would sweat out the absolutely basic problem of life. "Ye

shall be scattered every man. . . . and leave me alone." Then "Father, the hour is come." No, Jesus is not speaking some reckless thought. It is the word of one who can feel himself being sucked into a maelstrom of agony. If at any moment he could have spoken an idle word, it could not have been in this hour.

Revenge? Pique? Mere hatred of sinfulness? No, no. This is the friend of sinners who in patience possessed his soul. "No one taketh my life from me. I have power to lay it down. I have power to take it again." No one has ever questioned that this man was able to walk the waves of his own soul.

Yet here it is: "I pray not for the world"—here upon the threshold of his passion, from the lips of the Gift of God, from the heart of him who showed us the Father, and in the presence of the men he taught to love their enemies.

Well, it is far along in the prayer. Let us search the context.

I. The Goal

Early in the prayer we learn what this man is after, what is his goal. Glory he asks for and authority he talks of, but glory and authority for an end. That end he takes care not only to mention but to define—to define with pedagogic exactness. Eternal life is the objective and it is defined as the knowledge of the only true God and of him whom God sent. That is the goal. That is the purpose of the mission, as stated by the Emissary on the eve of his supreme act.

Eternal life it is—life unending, life that cheats the grave. Yes, but so much more. That is but the measure by quantity; that is but the *result* of the quality; here is the measure by quality. And what a definition of the quality! To know God and Jesus Christ—not merely to know *about* them, but to be intimate with them, to be on speaking terms with them—yes, rather to be on visiting terms, "abiding" terms, with them, to love as well as to revere them. And in the New Testament that always carries with it priestly holiness—"pure in heart, for they shall see God"—"like him, for we shall see him"—"perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect."

What a wrong we have done our Father! We have dared to talk of his not needing us and our fellowship—we, with our suave prattle about man's "seeking after God" and our contemptible, not to say blasphemous, assurance that we can interpret the heart of the

A Pastoral Prayer

By Charles Clayton Morrison

THOU Spirit of all goodness who hast already answered our prayer even before we ask, our hearts incline to Thee in thankfulness. Our lives are in Thy keeping. Our ways are marked out by Thy will. Thou art long beforehand with our soul. If there be anything in us that is good, it is ours only because it is Thy gift. Kneeling before Thee we would empty our hearts of all pride and self-conceit, for we know that all our virtues are mixed with evil thoughts and sinful deeds. But if Thou canst find in us anything that is praiseworthy, the praise belongeth to Thee.

We yield ourselves to Thy will. Make our hearts and minds, our hands and feet, fit instruments of Thy holy purpose. Forbid that any of us should shirk his part, or that any should seek to discharge it in the spirit of vainglory. Yet even as we humble ourselves before Thee, make us joyfully aware of the dignity with which Thou dost invest us by calling each of us to be a co-worker with Thee. We are overwhelmed with our littleness, with our seeming unimportance. Thy universe is so vast, its spaces so deep and wide, its stars so far away! What are we that Thou shouldst be mindful of us?

Yet Thou visitest each one of us, however lowly, kindling in our breast the flame of courage and boundless hope. May we eagerly look for Thy coming, and cherish Thy presence, and find our way amid the confusions of life by the candle which Thou hast lighted in our hearts.

Help us to unite all the strength that is in us and the loyalty of our hearts with the strength and loyalty of other men and women through whom Thou art building here a fairer world, a world of justice, of beauty and brotherhood. So may our modest lives, lifted by the tide of Thy righteous power, be carried far out on ever widening adventures of service.

We pray for every association with others in which we share—for our homes, our friendly circles, our neighborly relationships, for the city and the state. Give our rulers wisdom and integrity. Send us leaders whom we may trust. Save the people from those who make gain out of our ignorance and dullness. Quicken in us the civic conscience, so that we shall not be confounded by the machinations of those who seek public office for their own reward. Stir anew the idealism of our republic, that the spirit of selfishness and fear may be cast out and the vibrant spirit of hope and moral enthusiasm may reign in our land.

Accept the worship of our hearts today. And as we wait, touch our eyes with a fresh vision of the face of Christ. O Thou of Galilee, we cannot help naming Thy name when we talk with God. Come Thou amongst us once more. Gather us about Thy feet and talk to our wistful, eager hearts, as Thou didst gather Thy disciples about Thee on the lilied hillside long ago. Amen.

Father. We dare to rob him of his Father heart, we, who know something of the longings of our pigmy hearts for a wayward child and have heard that heavenly refrain, "How much more your Father." How dare we stand under the cross and gamble, as it were, with the very soul of the Almighty! No, no, God cannot be happy without us. If he could, the Bible would mean nothing and the life of Jesus would be God's own mockery of a lost race.

The greatest goal of God, the objective through all the centuries, is to get men back into knowledge, into fellowship, into an abiding relationship with heaven, and the cross is the tragic love letter of a broken-hearted Father, signed with his own blood. Crying after his own, in the end—mystery of mysteries!—he places himself in their very hands, so that in their very act of breaking the Bread of life, they may have their eyes opened and know him.

To know God, to know him in the most magnifying, the most humbling, the most awful, the most endearing, tender and comforting sense—aye, to love him—that is the life; and that carries with it a transformation embracing every ethical need. No true Christian quibbles here. "We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?"

So the Galilean Carpenter sets up a goal adequate for nineteen centuries—adequate on the last day of eternity.

And what of his means?

II. The Means

First, *Jesus himself.* Blasphemous presumption thus to make knowledge of himself part of the requisite to life eternal, unless, indeed, he be the unique Son of God. Very definitely he makes the relationship with the disciples the partial fulfilment of the mission. He talks of that mission as fulfilled even here before the passion; "I have accomplished the work," he says. What can he mean, unless it be that the personal knowledge of himself is vital, and then that the fact that he already has sanctified himself for that great sacrifice makes his work of revelation complete?

He prays for glory; where is it? What can he mean but that he looks on through the olive trees of the Garden, past the kiss of betrayal, beyond the loneliness of desertion and even through the midnight of Golgotha and the Hades of the tomb to the open sepulcher and the shining glory of redeemed humanity brought back into fellowship with God and made an abiding place for the very Spirit himself, while he himself sits as mediator for those who love him as none other was ever loved? To that glory he has sanctified himself. For the joy that was set before him, he despised the cross.

So Jesus, anxious even in the midst of an accounting of his trusteeship, asks for the divine aid to complete his dedication. He is himself the first element in the means by which that great goal is to be realized and he is so, mark you, because he is and is to be the revelation of God to them. "I manifested thy name unto them." "They know of a truth that I came forth from thee."

He is the means, for yet another reason: He is the Teacher. "They know that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are from thee: for the words which thou gavest me I have given unto them." "They have kept thy word."

So the character and the teaching of Jesus are the first factor in the work of bringing men to know God. That character and that teaching are complete in the cross and the resurrection to which Jesus has at this stage sanctified himself.

Edwin R. Errett

Jesus himself was the first means. Then, *the Apostles.*

Wonder of divine grace!—the second factor is this group of unlettered peasants who are about to run like a flock of terrified sheep. How can Jesus depend upon them? Well, first, he has manifested himself to them. "Ye have seen the Father." Then he has taught them. "They have kept thy word." They can never be the same again. Peter may deny him but a look from those eyes will send that man out to cry like a little child. Doubts may arise, but Thomas will yet drop to his knees, the very foundations of his being shaking with the cry, "My Lord and my God!"

Praying for these weak men, tools of the Father entrusted to his keeping for development, Jesus says of them, "In them I am glorified." In Peter, in James, John—Jesus was glorified? What a mystery! And yet what a prophecy!

And how are they to serve his purpose, to work out that glory, that redeemed humanity? First, by being kept in the divine name. He has kept them there and he prays that they may yet be kept there. And what does he mean? What has he been doing? The

"name" stands for the character, the will, the purpose, the spirit of God. By his own revelation of God in person and by teaching of the Father's will, he has built them into a genuine spiritual relationship. He has been bringing them into a sanctification in the truth, and as he prays that this sanctification may go on he leaves no doubt as to what the truth is—"Thy word is truth."

A third means—*the Church.*

"Thy word" is a testimony, a doctrine to be preached. So the Great Petitioner comes to the church, the third factor of the means, "those who believe through their word." Now he carries on his heart, in this hour of exquisite torment, the burden of the whole wayward church of the centuries, the church of the middle ages and the church of today, divided, impotent and compromising with materialism as it is. He prays for us, for we are all he has. He would save us and he would use us. The meal that has been leavened becomes the leavening medium. Even the wayward church is a means to his glory.

III. The Method

Of course, we have already observed the first essential—"Keep them in thy name"—and we have noted that this involves sanctification in the truth; that is, in the word of God. It is, in other words, close adherence to the example and teaching of him who is the revelation.

This is to be done without dilution from the world. With definite rejection of monasticism he pleads for protection from the evil in the world, not the malicious attacks, of course, but the malignant morals and doctrines of the world. If his disciples are to make men to know God, they must be as foreign an element in the world as is Jesus himself. If they are to build life eternal they cannot be conformed to this life.

But here is another fundamental need. Unity is an essential part of the method as well as an end in itself. It is a unity that grows out of doctrines; they are to be kept in the name of God. It is a spiritual unity and a working and effective unity, for it is such as the unity of God and the Son. It is a unity that requires no human organization and human creed; it existed before either and transcends both. It is not an organization; it is an organism, in which the individual Christian is the unit, the member.

How is this thing accomplished? "Keep them in thy name." "Sanctify them in the truth—thy word." We are united as we are individually united in the fundamental doctrine of the person and teaching of Christ. Would you have further proof of this? See the use he would make of the unity. See the specified objective: "That the world may believe that thou didst send me." This unity is to create conviction of a definite sort. How, then, can we escape the fact that it embraces a unity of doctrine?

But look you: Here is "the world" again. He definitely excluded it from his prayer and now he brings it in. And we have the explanation: What the world needs is not that someone should *pray* for it—not even that the Master himself should pray for it! The world needs *testimony,* vigorous, convincing and convicting testimony. The only great thing prayer can do for the sinning world is to strengthen and sanctify and unite those who must minister the words of life. Prayer for sinners is either misdirected zeal or cowardly refusal to do one's Christian duty.

How that finger of the Lord does find our fundamental weakness! What keeps the world from belief that God sent Jesus? What else but our lack of unity? How long could even the most blatant agnostic stand up against the impact of a church that moved like an army with banners, marching all one way, proclaiming the one gospel from every pulpit? Why does the man on the street refuse to take us Christians seriously when we talk of salvation? Why does he refuse to get excited about his sins? Simply because I tell him he can be saved by one process and the preacher down in the next block proffers salvation on other terms and the man across town contradicts both of us. This is the scandal of scandals. Scarcely could God himself blame the worldling for indifference in the presence of a church so absurdly, so heartlessly, so criminally indifferent to its trusteeship.

There is a worldwide ache for redemption. There is in every land a very nausea of sin. There is unhappiness at every fireside. Humankind waits for the man who can and will speak the sure word about God. That sure word God has spoken in the gospel of redemption through his Son. It involves nothing less than the longing of God to bring every man of every race to an intimate knowledge of himself. Therein is God glorified. But that word must be preached powerfully and that it will not be until the church can preach it unitedly. The hell the present church needs to dread is that which awaits the recreant trustees of the manifold grace of God.

Socially, too, we are in a depression. Social recovery awaits the day when we quit depending upon makeshift and insincere ecclesiastical union and strike out honestly for the real thing.

Make no mistake. It is more than a unity of word of doctrine only, though it certainly is that. It is a unity of personal loyalty and love and life. It is not a unity of organization, for in the church organization has ever been the curse of all true unity.

So, after all, the Lord did not contradict the blessed old "golden text." God did so love the world and so too did Jesus. The trouble is with us. That blessed Dreamer of Galilee died to make the glory of his dream come true for the simple reason that eternal life is no superficial thing to be handed out on a golden platter by a whimsical oriental monarch, as if it were a sort of political plum of heaven. It is a profound personal transformation that costs life itself, a cross for the Redeemer and a cross for every one who would come after him. The hungry heart of the Father cannot be satisfied until every famished prodigal seeks the Home where there is bread enough and to spare. The glory of God cannot be complete until the ransomed sons grow up into the full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

This "Foolishness of Preaching"

By Burris Jenkins

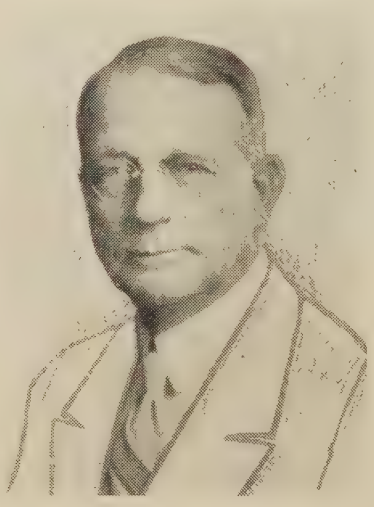
SOMEONE making a survey of high schools concerning anticipated future employment reported that whenever he asked an assembly of boys and girls how many intended to be farmers, they always laughed and two or three timidly held up their hands. When he asked how many intended to be preachers, they laughed uproariously and nobody held up his hand. Yet there are more men and women engaged in farming than in any other one thing, perhaps than in all other things; and probably there will continue to be as long as humanity lives physically on the fruits of the soil. Always, too, there will be preaching as long as people do not live by bread alone but hunger for something else intangible.

Phillips Brooks used to say that when a young man first began to preach he wondered why everybody didn't come to hear him, but that later on he wondered why anybody did. Nevertheless, the old saying, "Make a better lead pencil or a better sermon than your neighbor and the world will make a beaten pathway to your door," stands just as true as it ever did. We may not understand why, and it may all be foolishness, still people want to hear preaching, seem to need to hear preaching, in many instances seem to be saved by preaching. Men will continue to preach, therefore, as long as men continue to aspire.

• *Preaching to Changing Times*

Styles must change, however, in preaching as in most things else with changing times. If it is true that the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns, then it must follow that those who preach to widening minds must widen their messages. No man can tell another how he ought to preach; no man can even tell another how he himself goes about it; but certain self-evident facts stand out, certain elementary principles. And it appears to me that the very first of these connects up with the changing of time. The preacher must begin where the people are, with the things the people are talking about and thinking of. He makes a mistake right at the start if he begins with something remote, something out of harmony with present day interests. He must grasp thoroughly the very first of pedagogical principles, the principle of apperception, that is, taking hearers where they stand and leading them gradually on to where they ought to stand.

Jesus showed himself a past master in this elementary art. He talked about the things that concerned his listeners—sheep and folds, bread and stones, scorpions and fish, coins which women wore in strings round their foreheads, lamps and oil. Generally,



Burris Jenkins

however, the modern preacher misses his impressions if he stresses these same illustrations too far. Most children and even grown people today know nothing about sheep. Many of them never saw one. Most of them never saw a scorpion. Most of them never saw a lamp and never saw anybody pour oil in a lamp. The things people have closest to hand today are quite different things—electric lights, motor cars, radios, motion pictures, water faucets, stiff black clothes, of blue or brown or gray, but stiff, decidedly stiff. If one wishes to capture the attention of a modern congregation, he must clothe his speech in modern garb.

• *Success thru Thinking in Pictures*

Here may be injected a second principle, that all public speech, to be effective, must be concrete, vivid, picturesque. In a college lecture room, possibly in a parliament, and less probably in a court room, one may dare to be abstract, philosophical. In a pulpit one may venture upon the abstruse only for a very short time and only at his peril. Henry Ward Beecher, although he grappled with the profoundest themes, schooled himself from his very beginnings in concrete and picturesque speech. He tried to think in pictures and to keep always before his hearers pictures, pictures, pictures. He used to say that when he found his congregation growing indifferent, he took them to the country. Pictures can always be seen in the country—cows, horses, chickens, wells—things that people cannot see in town and many of them things they remember from their childhood. One can wake up a city audience with city sights provided one sees them first and points them out to eyes that have only dimly seen them hitherto. All the complex life of our city streets provides pictures for the use of preachers. You can find them in newspapers, chain stores, cafeterias, saxophones, adding machines, typewriters, push buttons and bells.

Humanity forever furnishes pictures, the most interesting in the world, known and read of all men. We have only to see clearly enough the ways and the manners, the lives, the comedies and tragedies, of men and women and retell them, to catch the public ear and reach the public heart.

• *Observing, and Breaking, the Rules*

Most men of experience in the pulpit have found it necessary to throw away many of the rules given in the seminary. Rules hinder freedom, cramp and confine personality; and the very essence of preaching is the projection of personality. For example, they used to tell us in the seminary never to use the first personal pronoun, and never to relate personal experiences—never to say, "A man said to me last week—" or "I knew a man or saw a man or went fishing with a man or sat at the bedside of a man who said and did so-and-so." Only one thing to do to a rule like that, and that is to throw it away. You can put a congregation to sleep by obeying that rule; and you can wake a congregation up by disobeying it. Suppose your sermon turns out to be not quite so good a literary product. What of it? Are you after literary products or after the attention and finally the hearts of men and women? Only one rule I know deserves keeping and that is the rule,

"Use as perfect English as you can." Even that rule sometimes needs breaking deliberately, for a choice bit of slang or a colloquialism. Beecher used to say also, "When the English language gets in the way of my thought, so much the worse for the English language." That is an attitude which, in my judgment, none but a Beecher can quite dare to assume. The pulpit becomes immensely more powerful if it gains reputation as an authority in pure English.

• *Dogma is Gone—Life Is Here!*

Another change in the style of our time is the change to a scientific attitude of mind and scientific habits of thinking. Even the untrained masses have caught the contagion and have fallen into the way of reaching conclusions by the inductive method. No longer can we effectively hand down authoritative statements to a questioning and a skeptical world. All authorities, these days, stand a bombardment of interrogation. No use in saying to men today, "The Bible says so-and-so," or "The church says so-and-so," or "Religion says so-and-so." The Bible, the church, and religion, all these are under investigation by the scientific method. The facts are marshaled from all directions, placed side by side, examined from all angles, and then and only then deductions are drawn, conclusions are reached. Far wiser, then, when wishing to clinch a statement of Bible, church, or religion, to begin patiently and concretely to assemble the facts, to make the pictures, and slowly, gradually to lead up to the generalization. No man gets anywhere today, not even in his own family, let alone his own congregation, by dogmatizing. Dogma went out with oil lamps and water jars carried on the head.

It follows as the night the day that the modern mind has little interest in the sectism, the denominationalism, of two or three generations ago, which grew out of dogma. Something of the old atmosphere lingers; and each denomination has a vocabulary, a set of shibboleths, a set of beliefs and traditions, which are all but unintelligible to anybody outside the ranks.

To hear those who were brought up in one of these denominations holding an intimate conversation concerning the affairs of that particular household of faith is almost like listening to a group talking in a foreign tongue. This nomenclature, the freemasonry of one's own sect, easily creeps into the pulpit. Immediately the preacher alienates the man in the street. He doesn't give a rap for the denomination; he grows impatient with the passwords of sectism. The world wants religion; and today more than any day in my knowledge, I believe, it wants Christ, simple, plain, and clear, freed from all dogmas and sects and petty limitations. It would gladly welcome him, and it will gladly listen to men who make him clear, understandable, living and breathing.

• *The Power that Comes with Suffering*

This leads us to another principle, the necessity for sympathy. To preach effectively one must have lived as men live, must have had the joys and the sorrows that men have, must have walked the same road, easy and hard, that men have had to walk. Just as no singer can attain the highest degree of artistry until he or she has suffered, has known a broken heart, has met drama and tragedy in life face to face and enacted it, so can no preacher reach the hearts of his fellow men with comfort, with courage, with inspiration to get up and go on and achieve, unless he himself has suffered. One of the greatest preachers in America at this hour, so one of his most intimate friends tells me, lacks only this one thing to make him supreme, to place him where Beecher and Brooks once stood, a prince of the pulpit. He has not suffered. His life has ever gone in pleasant places, unbroken, placid, prosperous. He has never bowed beneath the storm of obloquy, never writhed under the pain that men know in their darkest hour. Therefore his song misses that minor note of deep and profound fellowship of suffering.

Joseph Parker, I think it was, who late in life declared that if he had his work to do over again, he would talk more to the broken-hearted. Let a wide and deep tide flow out from the pulpit, of sympathy, of understanding, of desire to help and to heal, to encourage and uplift those whose hearts are bleeding and sore, and a profound response will follow. So few can understand, so few can sympathize, so few can help us in a lonely world, lonely even though packed with crowds, that people instantly will want to touch the hem of the garment of any man who seems to understand.

• *Today Needs the Same Old Messages*

After all, the old world has not changed, only the dress of it, only the styles of it, only the customs of it. The demand rings out for the same old messages, clothed in a different garb and cut on a different pattern, that Amos and Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah, Jesus and Paul proclaimed so many hundreds of years ago. Preach those messages, and men still will tell you they do not want to hear them. Still they will say, "Let the preacher stick to the Bible. Let him preach the good old dogmas. What business has he dealing with industry, statescraft, foreign relations, peace and war?" Those are exactly the things the prophets from Isaiah down to Paul rang the changes on. Those are exactly the things that the American preacher of today, over protest and criticism, must continue to thunder. No age ever needed them worse. Ours to refuse to be muzzled, to equivocate, to compromise, to backwater and to shillyshally, to soft pedal and to conciliate. Use adroitness and finesse? To be sure. All the skill, all the delicacy, all the expert performance of apperception that we can muster, certainly; but let nobody put the bridle on the pulpit; let nobody from outside of it try to boss the job. Prophets cannot live with bridles and blinders on.

No age ever needed that old message hurled into its teeth more than this age needs it. The golden rule in business. A fair, square, and honest chance to work for every man who wants to work. A just and decent wage and standard of living for every worker and farmer in the land. Fraternity and comity among business houses, banks, stores, shops, and factories. Cooperation in place of cutthroat competition. Business leaders dimly begin to discern that these principles only can lead us out of depression, can save the modern world. Time for preachers to strike while the iron is hot, to preach the economics of Jesus, the ethics of the Nazarene, the spirit of the peace maker, Christ instead of Mars.

• *Wanted—the Boldness of the Prophets!*

A big job, this foolishness of preaching. Sometimes we feel the futility of it just because we do not comprehend the bigness of it. How delicate and fine an art, to take people in the midst of their everyday concerns and gently lead them on from the things they play with to the greater things they ought to attain! How much study and thought it demands to keep always a series of pictures flashing before the minds of hearers, Sunday after Sunday, pictures freighted with significance and worldwide importance.

How essential, not simply that a man practice what he preach, but that he *be* what he preaches! If preaching is the projection of personality, if as Father Taylor said, "The business of the preacher is to take something hot out of his own heart and shove it into mine," then first of all he must try to live inside himself the light that he tries to throw. No man can tell another how to do it. Each man must be himself, himself and himself alone, sublimated, refined, incandescent with his message.

Never was a day which more needed this foolishness of preaching; for the some old world staggers along because it will not learn the simple rudiments of life—gentleness, kindness, love, the golden rule, the beauty of service, the willingness to sacrifice and to die for the truth, all the things which Jesus taught.

WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE

ALL the sermons in this issue are contributed by editors of religious newspapers. These preachers think of the editorial desk as their pulpit, and of their widely scattered body of readers as their congregation. They are true shepherds of the souls of men, and their service to the church and the kingdom is one to which The Christian Century Pulpit delights to pay tribute.

Born in Glasgow, Scotland, Rev. ROBERT A. ASHWORTH was educated in this country—at Columbia and Union Theological seminary. He held a number of pastorates, among them: First Baptist church, Meriden, Conn.; First Baptist, Milwaukee, Wis., and the Church of the Redeemer, Yonkers, N. Y. Following a ministry of nearly 10 years at Yonkers, he came to the editorship of The Baptist, Chicago, about two years ago.

Rev. WILLIAM E. GILROY *is a native of* Ontario, Can., and received his A. B. in the University of Toronto; he graduated in theology at Victoria university. He was minister at Broadview Avenue church, Toronto, for six years, during part of which period he was editor of the Canadian Congregationalist. Other Canadian pastorates were at Brantford and Hamilton. Dr. Gilroy came to the United States in 1919, and ministered to Plymouth church, Fond du Lac, Wis., for three years. Since 1922 he has been editor of the Congregationalist and Herald of Gospel Liberty, Boston.

A graduate in arts and theology of Victoria university, Toronto, Rev. W. B. CREIGHTON was for 20 years editor of the Christian Guardian, publication of the Methodist church, Canada. He has edited the New Outlook (Toronto), organ of the United Church of Canada, since the union of the churches in 1925.

Rev. DAN B. BRUMMITT *came to* America from England in 1882. Educated at Baker university and at Drew seminary, he held pastorates in Lawrence, Kan., Ft. Smith and Little Rock, Ark., and other points. From 1901 to 1910 he was assistant editor of the Epworth Herald, and from 1912 to 1924 he edited this weekly. Since 1924 he has been editor of the Northwestern Christian Advocate, Chicago, and he has recently been elected to the editorship of the Central Christian Advocate, Kansas City.

Graduating from Western Theological seminary in 1878—having his A. B. from Washington and Jefferson college—Rev. JAMES H. SNOWDEN was ordained in the Presbyterian ministry. He held three pastorates, his last at Second Presbyterian church, Washington, Pa., where he ministered from 1886 to 1911. He then became professor of systematic theology at Western seminary, holding this chair until 1926; during the following three years he was professor of apologetics. Dr. Snowden has been editor of the Presbyterian Banner, Pittsburgh, during two periods—from 1898 to 1917, and from 1926 to date. He was editor of the Presbyterian Magazine, New York, from 1921 to 1926. Dr. Snowden has written a score of books.

Since 1917, Rev. PAUL S. LEINBACH has been editor of the Reformed Church Messenger, Philadelphia. Previous to this period he ministered to a number of churches, among them: Trinity church, Pittsburgh, and Hamilton Grange Reformed church, New York; his theological education was received at the Reformed Church seminary. Dr. Leinbach has been highly honored by his own church and by many interdenominational organizations.

Rev. EDWIN R. ERRETT *has been editor* of the Christian Standard, Disciples of Christ weekly published in Cincinnati, since 1929. In earlier years he had been engaged in editorial work in the Bible school department of the Standard Publishing company; he was editor-in-chief of the department from 1925 to 1929. Mr. Errett received his A. B. at Bethany college, and pursued graduate work at Yale School of Religion.

CHARLES CLAYTON MORRISON *is editor* of The Christian Century Pulpit.

Rev. BURRIS JENKINS *is minister of* Linwood Community church, Kansas City, Mo., and editor of the Christian, a Disciples publication.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

WILLIAM R. REID, Franklin Street Christian, Fall River, Mass. "The Mighty Minority." Matt. 18:20—". . . where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

CLIFFORD W. COLLINS, Associate Congregational, Baltimore, Md. "A Reliable Investment." Mark 10:30—"A hundredfold now, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

CHARLES F. BANNING, Baptist, Richmond Hill, N. Y. "Poise or Pose." Matt. 23:5—"To be seen of men."

ALLAN KNIGHT CHALMERS, Broadway Tabernacle, New York city. "The Intolerance of Fear." Isa. 8:12—". . . neither fear ye their fear."

LINDLEY H. MILLER, St. Clement's Episcopal, Berkeley, Cal. "The Spirit of Youth in the City Streets." Acts 2:17—"I will pour out my spirit . . . your young men shall see visions."

FRED R. HARRISON, First Methodist, Malvern, Ark. "Starting Where You Are." Mark 2:11—"Arise, take up thy bed."

FOR YOUR SERMON TITLE AND TEXT

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Title of sermon

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Text used (Write out the text)

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Name of minister

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The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THE TASTE left in the mind by the presence in one city of the two leading American political parties less than two weeks apart, is not a pleasant one. An observer is compelled to draw upon all his resources of philosophy and patience in order to sustain an optimistic attitude toward our democracy. The nation seems to be in the hands of the most sordid, timid and self-seeking elements of our national life, brought together in two closely knit organizations whose reason for existence is to capture office and divide the spoils of patronage. Both parties have become ends in themselves; neither conceives of itself as an instrument of any dominant ideal or of the common good; but each thinks of policies and the common welfare in terms of party success. This, however, does not justify a cynical attitude on any one's part. It should, on the contrary, stimulate us to find a remedy. That remedy, I believe, lies in the organizing of another kind of political party—a party without candidates, and therefore secure against the temptations of patronage and special privilege. Special interests are organized; selfishness is organized; office seeking, office holding and patronage distributing are all organized. In a word, *interestedness* is organized. Why should not *disinterestedness* be organized? And why should not the Christian church take the lead in effecting such an organization?

The Political Conventions

The Book of the Month

THE JEW THROUGH THE CENTURIES, *by Herbert L. Willett. Chicago: Willett, Clark & Company,* $3.00.

IF THIS were not the serious work of a scholar engaged upon a task of scholarly research, I would like to call it a story book. Its theme and the manner of its unfolding is more intriguing and gripping than any novel. It is the story of the wanderings of a homeless race through all countries, during thirty centuries, living side by side with other races, but resisting all the forces that work for the loss of their identity through assimilation. The racial persistence of the Jewish people is one of the amazing phenomena of history. What is the explanation of this persistence? Professer Willett shatters a great illusion by taking the position that the modern Jew is not the racial descendant of the ancient Hebrew. The backbone of the Hebrew race, he argues, was broken at the time of the Exile—five hundred years before Christ. The Return did not reestablish the ancient connection, but a new race, composite in character, emerged. The Jews of the centuries and of today are not the children of Abraham, in a biological sense, but a mixture of many bloods. Their unity is a cultural unity, which has been maintained inwardly by their religious heritage, and outwardly by the unfriendly reaction of their alien environment upon them. They have been "the children of sorrow, the product of dispersion on one side, and of the ghetto and the pale on the other. They have been subject to every type of oppression, persecution, outrage and spoliation. . . ." Dr. Willett presents us with a historical study which finally comes to a head in the ethical problem of the relation of Jew and Christian in the world of today.

A Thought for the Month

FAITH is inherently conservative. It lets go only what it must and when it must. Religion is the object of no little chiding by scientific people on this account. It is charged that we cherish our beliefs too dearly and cling to them against what seems at the moment contrary evidence. We are exhorted to hold our faith tentatively, as a chemist or physicist holds his conclusions, and to change without emotion when new knowledge comes, as the scientist changes his views when an experiment reveals new facts or laws. There is, of course, ample justification for such criticism. We must learn to discriminate between the essentials and the irrelevancies of faith, so that we shall not set up false tests either for ourselves or others. Like science, faith must grow from less to more. And growth means that many things must be left behind which once we cherished. Nevertheless, the religious attitude toward truth cannot be like the scientific attitude. The scientist has no stake in his scientific beliefs. But in religious experience we weave our emotions around the Object of our faith and commit our very lives to its keeping. We cannot let that Object vanish or see it menaced without pain. Therefore we cling to it with the tenacity of a lover. It cannot be otherwise. And who would have it otherwise? Allowing full justice to the criticism that faith clings too long to outworn formulas, nevertheless, if I had to choose, I would prefer, like Wordsworth, to be "a pagan suckled in a creed outworn" than to have no faith at all. I will change my faith whenever a higher faith appears. To exchange the faith one now has for a lesser faith is ethically ignoble. It is a sound instinct that impels us to cling to our faith until it is pushed aside, not by new knowledge, but by a new faith that is richer and better than the old.

The Tenacity of Faith

Charles Clayton Morrison

Get Acquainted!

AN ENTHUSIASTIC READER of The Christian Century Pulpit writes that one of its outstanding values, to him, is that the reading of the magazine for nearly three years has given him a great circle of minister friends whom he now feels he knows, having heard them preach. It happens that he goes about the country rather widely, and one of his delights, he says, is that he is always running across some minister whom he had "met" through the Pulpit.

Consider how much better YOU know the preachers of America because you have followed the Pulpit through its nearly three years. And you not only *know* these preachers—you know what kind of *sermons* they preach.

You have heard the men who through long years of service have become household names—Joseph Fort Newton, Charles E. Jefferson, S. Parkes Cadman, James E. Freeman, Robert E. Speer, Lynn Harold Hough, John Haynes Holmes, John Timothy Stone, James I. Vance, Bishop Stewart, Bishop McDowell, Bishop McConnell, Bishop Hughes, Merton S. Rice, Henry Sloane Coffin, William Pierson Merrill, Harry Emerson Fosdick, Peter Ainslie, Charles W. Gilkey, Clarence E. Macartney, F. F. Shannon, Hugh T. Kerr, Mark A. Matthews, Albert Parker Fitch, and many others.

You have become well acquainted with the younger men, many of whom are already widely known as "social prophets"—Niebuhr, Tittle, Luccock, Wicks, Harold Phillips, Oswald McCall, Albert Edward Day; Beaven, Bowie, Buttrick, Sockman, Coe, Krumbine, Chalmers, Kinsolving, Robbins, etc., etc.

And you have also, in your book of acquaintance, scores of able preachers of whom you knew nothing—until you met them in the Pulpit.

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The Christian Century Pulpit

Appreciations

"I have been an eager reader of the Pulpit since its first issue; it shows that the Christian pulpit is not as impotent as its critics claim." J. Carroll Wright, *Assistant Minister, First Presbyterian Church, Akron, O.*

Accept my best wishes for your great work through the Christian Century and your glorious message through the Pulpit. Caradoc J. Morgan, *First Congregational Church, Sauk Centre, Minn.*

"I am much interested in your Preacher Problems department. In your weeklies you are making a splendid contribution to the religious thought of the country." George S. Frazer, *First Presbyterian Church, Pensacola, Fla.*

"Allow me to express to you my hearty thanks for the help and inspiration I regularly receive from The Christian Century Pulpit." Roland B. Lutz, *Presbyterian Church, Abingdon, Pa.*

"I enjoy the Pulpit and am constantly interesting others in it." W. Clyde Howard, *Second Presbyterian Church, Chicago.*

"You are indeed rendering a most significant service. And I am sure my feeling is echoed by all of the great Pulpit family." Paul J. Snyder, *Calvary Methodist Church, Minneapolis, Minn.*

"I enjoy the Pulpit, and intend to use it for study next year in a class in homiletics which I am conducting." Thomas S. Kepler, *Mount Union College, Alliance, O.*

"Your 'Title and Texts' department is one of the most suggestive features of the magazine." J. C. McCoy, *First Presbyterian Church, Marysville, O.*

"I count the Christian Century Pulpit as one of the most stimulating magazines I receive." *H. Hughes Wagner, Methodist Church, McMechen, W. Va.*

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